

March 10, 2022

TESTIMONY OF LESLIE ANDERSON

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BEFORE THE CONNECTICUT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

In Opposition to RB 292 An Act Concerning Heating Efficiency in New Residential Construction and Major Alterations of Residential Buildings

The Propane Gas Association of New England (PGANE) is pleased to have the opportunity to offer its comments regarding RB 292.

The Propane Gas Association of New England is a regional alternative energy trade association representing members of the propane industry in the 6 New England States. We exist to serve the propane industry by promoting safety, education and public awareness of the uses of propane. Our membership includes propane companies and suppliers, including numerous small companies who are often family owned and operated, many for several generations.

We oppose RB 292, because it seeks to promote heat pumps at the expense of propane systems and because it does not advance economic security or climate objectives. Propane systems are more efficient and less costly to consumers than heat pumps and other electric technology. Using the ISO New England power mix data, it takes 2.52 units of electricity to produce and deliver one unit of energy to a home, versus just 1.01 for propane. In addition, propane appliances produce less greenhouse gas emissions than electricity as well as less nitrogen and sulfur oxides. In fact, propane is the preferred partner with solar for zero net energy housing. Comparing electricity and propane with a lifecycle analysis, propane wins hands down with the lowest carbon emissions.

As the grid increases in renewable energy sources so will propane. Renewable propane energy is already being added to conventional propane and we expect propane to continue to be cleaner than electricity in Connecticut as the state works toward its climate goals. Eliminating propane would put our citizens at risk because a strong industry is required if we are to meet the numerous electricity backup energy sources that utilize propane today. Generators for homes, hospitals, cell towers, to heat water for the homeless, heat outdoor spaces for restaurants, and emergency management to name only a few, rely on propane when the power is out.

Heat pumps need the most energy from the grid during the months when the grid is most stressed. When the grid is stressed, the electricity plants switch from using natural gas to diesel or heating oil to generate electricity. **For example, on January 16, 2022, 24% of the grid was running on oil and 3% was running on coal.** By installing more heat pumps, Connecticut will be increasing our greenhouse gas emissions and costing consumers more money to heat their homes, because even high-performance heat pumps have not been proven to be efficient below 40 degrees.

Propane is nontoxic, does not contaminate groundwater or surface water, is portable, and is already present across our state supporting local businesses and employees by providing green jobs. In Connecticut we have numerous small businesses and family-owned businesses that make up our industry. Most of our members are local Connecticut companies employing Connecticut citizens and contributing to their local communities. Utilizing propane contributes to Connecticut's economy and promotes green alternative energy usage here in our State.

Several of our members have been installing heat pumps and servicing them throughout the New England area and they are extremely problematic. First, they can't be covered in snow or they don't work. Second, they do not work in extreme cold without a backup energy source. Third, they are not efficient below 40 degrees.

Unlike electricity, there are no ozone depleting chemicals used in the transportation of propane. Electricity transmission releases sulfur hexafluoride, which is used as an electrical insulator. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, SF6 is the most potent greenhouse gas that it has evaluated, with a global warming potential of 23,900[25] times that of CO2. Increasing our reliance on electricity will only add to more releases of SF6. European countries are banning the use of SF6 in all but high voltage switchgear, because its lifespan is 800-900 years in the high atmosphere. Why are we promoting an energy source that contributes the most potent greenhouse gas to our environment?

Using propane furthers the fundamental environmental goal to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle as promoted by EPA and DEP. Most people do not realize that propane is a biproduct of natural gas processing. About 5% of natural gas processing produces propane. If propane is not captured and beneficially used to offset another energy source, it is simply burned off. Propane is a partner with renewable energy as it is the perfect backup for solar installations and wind turbines. It is a recognized clean alternative fuel by EPA under the 1990 Clean Air Act, and it is an essential backup for our ever-increasing use of the electric grid. Renewable propane is also a viable innovation and under development from renewable sources.

Our industry is concerned about the environment and is actively working to reduce carbon emissions. Across the globe, propane is being used to solve the world's greatest health threat, indoor air pollution caused primarily by burning wood for cooking and heating. Over 3.5 million people die annually from cooking with solid fuels. This leads to deforestation at an alarming rate in many developing countries and causes enormous carbon dioxide emissions. In addition, moving 100 families to propane from wood saves an acre of rainforest land. **Across the globe propane is being used improve human health, reduce carbon emissions, and reduce deforestation.** ¹ Maine needs to join in this effort recognized by many countries around the globe, and partner with propane as a solution for reducing carbon dioxide emissions!

I thank you for the opportunity to comment before the committee and ask you to vote NO on RB 292.

¹https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwi8r_CkxKrgAhVxTd8KHRHKDVsQFjAAegQICRAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wlpga.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2018%2F10%2FSubstituing-LPG-for-Wood-Carbon-and-Deforestation-Impacts.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0tDVhcCRzteoCRO2sxX8jc